

NOTES ON THE FLORA OF SAMOA

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During an inventory of the wildlife and wildlife habitats of American Samoa (from June 1975 to December 1976) undertaken by Environment Consultants, Inc., under contract to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (contract no. 11-16-0001-5782FA), a comprehensive checklist of the native vascular flora of American Samoa was compiled. In addition to several new unnamed species that were collected, four previously named species in the flora were found to be in need of new names. Three of the four require new combinations, since they have not been transferred to the proper genera. The fourth species has an invalid name which must be changed.

The voucher specimens listed after the species descriptions are the property of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; one set will be deposited in the herbarium of the Smithsonian Institution, and a second set in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum in Honolulu. The comprehensive report on the inventory, An Inventory of the Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat of the Islands of American Samoa, which includes an annotated checklist of the vascular flora, is expected to be published in 1978 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The four species are as follows:

Orchidaceae

Malaxis samoensis (Schltr.) comb. nova

A small, yellow-flowered ground orchid, occasional in the coastal to montane forests. Endemic to Samoa. It was originally named Microstylis samoensis Schlechter in Repert. Spec., Nov. Regini Veg. Fasc. IX:93, 1911. W 2742

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Urticaceae

Elatostema tutuilense nom. novum

A small herb, rare in streambeds in the rain forest. Collected only once, by Reinecke in 1894, growing in the streambed of Matafao Stream (Faga'alu Canyon) on Tutuila. Reinecke named the species Elatostema radicans Reinecke in Die Flora der Samoa-Inseln, Bot. Jahrb. 25:624-5, 1896, which is, however, a later homonym for a species named by Weddell. Consequently, the new name Elatostema tutuilense is proposed, the type for which is Reinecke No. 590.

Myrtaceae

Syzygium samoense (Burk.) comb. nova

A medium-sized tree, common in the montane and cloud forests. The original name is Eugenia samoense Burkill in Journ. Linn. Soc. XXXV:38, 1901, based on specimens from Samoa and Vava'u (Tonga). It was subsequently forgotten and not transferred to the genus Syzygium. It is endemic to Samoa, since the Vava'u plants have been assigned to another species. W 2688 W 2749 W 2957 W 3731

Asclepiadaceae

Hoya betchei (Schltr.) comb. nova

A climbing vine of the forest, especially in sunny habitats. It is endemic to Samoa. The first valid name for this species appears to be Physostelma betchei Schlechter in Engl. Jahrb. XI Bleibl. 92:16, 1908. Physostelma is, however, restricted to Southeast Asia. Thus, this species should be moved to the genus Hoya. A purple-flowered variety on Tutuila has been described as var. tutuilensis Christophersen, under the name Hoya chlorantha Rechinger. This species is synonymous with Hoya betchei and this variety is var. tutuilense (Chr.) comb. nova. W 2765 W 3110